The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

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EDUCATION OF WORKERS VITAL TO LABOR PROGRESS

Philadelphia, Apr. 25.—"There is every indication that the organizations of labor are entering upon a new era, one in which education is going to play a greater part," William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, declared in an address before the fourth annual convention of the Workers' Education Bureau of America.

"This will involve not only an understanding of the way in which to present the demands of the workers in the conference room but also the successful way in which the economic strength of the workers can be consolidated, centralized and most efficiently used when occasion requires," continued President Green.

"Quite early the membership of organized labor properly appraised the value of education.

"This is shown by their early declarations and stand in favor of and in support of free public schools and compulsory education. This early demand that every child should be afforded an opportunity to acquire an education

"They fought for child labor legislation, for the widest, fullest and freest opportunity for school attendance and for legislation which would compel children to attend school.

"After this principle was established the workers realized more than ever that education is not a process ending with common school experience.

"Organization of industrial enterprises upon a constantly enlarging basis, with the introduction of machinery and other economic agencies of production, brought home the necessity of a plan of adult education.

"When this need became apparent a plan was evolved.

"The Workers' Education Bureau is the medium through which we are giving to the worker an understanding of industry and society and his relation to both.

"The worker is being taught, through a course of study formulated and arranged by the Workers' Education Bureau, the value of his economic strength and the importance of joining with his fellow-men in wisely directing the use of their intellectual and organized powers along constructive lines in the furtherance of the work of organized labor.

"Through this work of education much latent ability is being developed into active use and service.

"The net result is that the cause of the worker is being intelligently strengthened educationally and economically.

"One outstanding phase of this educational work to which labor attaches very great importance is the dissemination of information concerning the philosophy, aims and purposes of trade unionism among the people outside the labor movement.

"This is a most necessary work because, while deplorable, it is nevertheless true that a great many people lack understanding of the program of organized labor and its principles.

"Many of these classes of people are sympathetic toward organized labor while others are actively hostile.

"Those who are sympathetic are seeking knowledge and information concerning the exalted things for which labor unequivocably stands.

"Those who are hostile endeavor to discredit labor by quoting from the writings and statements of certain unfriendly economists and from the writings and books of authors who expound a form of political theories which labor never has practiced.

"Through the Workers' Education Bureau and through the means made available by the organized labor movement these groups as well as other groups of society are being informed and educated upon the subjects of collective bargaining, organization of working men and women, making and signing of wage contracts, social and economic justice and the humane ideals which have always characterized labor's program."

On the question of trade union leadership President Green said:

"As I reflect upon what the trade union movement may become I am treading cautiously and fully aware of the liabilities and the grave responsibility of guiding it aright.

"When passion inflames the minds of men and when bigotry and intolerance influence their conduct and, furthermore, when other industrial and social factors prevent constructive development we become embroiled in conflicts which bring waste and retrogression.

"The need of the hour is more of conferences, more honest and searching analysis of the facts and intelligent effort manifested in order to determine the principles upon which agreements can be based.

"I am sure that we all appreciate fully the difficult problems and heavy responsibilities that rest upon the spokesmen and leaders of the organized labor movement.

"In grappling with these problems and in the solution of these duties may we not expect to find in the possibilities of workers' education that which will give us sustaining faith and assurance for immediate planning as well as hope and guidance for the future.

"The trade union is the agency and education is the method by which labor confidently expects to make material and spiritual progress."

UNITED STATES STEEL MAKES BIG PROFITS

New York, April 25.—Big business continually points to the "modest" dividends paid by many corporations as an answer to the frequent charge of excessive profits.

The Wall Street Journal uncovers the hypocrisy of the modest dividend claim by calling attention to the disproportion of the net profits of the United States Steel Corporation during the last 24 years.

The corporation "earned" $2,027,176,664 net for stock, but only paid out in preferred and common dividends $1,176,473,000. What became of the difference amounting to over $800,000,000? The corporation "plowed it back" into its industries, which means that 42 per cent of the net profits was used to enlarge the business.

When this "plowing back" began, the common stock was 'not worth much, but with the earning capacity of the corporation's plants increased by the "plowing back" process, United States Steel common mounted way above par, and the interests which own it have cleared up millions of dollars.

Declaring modest dividends and plowing large portions of earnings back into the business is one of capital's clever devices to conceal profits and disarm public opinion.

MINE OWNERS CAUSE DISASTERS IN MINES

London, England, April 25.—Labor leaders hold mine owners and the British government jointly responsible for the mining disaster near Newcastle in which 38 miners were killed.

Labor men claim the mine owners refuse to comply with the legal safety requirements of the mining law and that the government does not compel them to comply with the law.

George Hirst, one of the miner members of Parliament, pointed out that both fatal and non-fatal mine accidents had increased during the last five years, the fatal accidents running from 1,103 in 1920 to 1,293 in 1924, and the non-fatal accidents from 116,930 in 1920 to 211,610 in 1924, a total for the five year period of 5,554 fatal accidents and 811,298 non-fatal accidents.

Mr. Warren, the labor member from the constituency in which the mine disaster occurred, declared that such calamities would not take place if the mines act were properly applied. He said that although the miner was driven to take the risks in his work in order to secure a living for his family, he did not want to be caught like a rat in a trap by flooding or explosion largely due to neglect in carrying out mining regulations.

Robert Smillie, veteran official of the miners' union, claimed that during the 70 years preceding the war more men were killed and injured in the mines than in all of Great Britain's battles during that period. He likewise charged responsibility for mining disasters to the mine owners' refusal to obey mining laws. "I have attended over 100 inquiries," he said, "and in the majority of them the explosions have been caught like rats and could have been prevented by proper legislation or even under existing legislation if carried out."

Mr. Smillie also advocated the French system of workmen inspectors under which representatives of the miners themselves devote their whole time to mine inspection.

BIG BUSINESS HITS CONGRESS; WANTS ONE-MAN GOVERNMENT

Boston, April 25.—"Our forefathers did not want a one-man government," declared David I. Walsh, recent U. S. Senator, in an article defending the Senate from the usurping tendencies of the President and the propaganda of those sinister interests which desire the destruction of representative government and the establishment of a presidential dictatorship.

Pointing out that "the President is deliberately left by the constitution dependent upon the sanction of Congress for the performance of every duty entrusted to him," Walsh asserts that the statesmen who framed our constitution deliberately made the individual authority of the President subordinate to the collective intelligence of Congress. "Above everything else they were determined that America should never have a king."

Taking up the assault of big business on democratic institutions, Walsh says: "This modern world of ours is being perpetually influenced by currents of subtle propaganda. The American people must keep alert, or they will wake up some fine morning and find themselves gone. Congress exercises its constitutional prerogatives and dares to do its duty, dares to oppose the will of a President. So there has arisen a persistent propaganda against Congress, especially against the Senate. If this propaganda were successful, Congress would be shorn of its power and we would have in the United States a 'one-man government'—the very worst fears of our forefathers would then be realized.

Defending the action of the Senate in refusing to approve President Coolidge's first selection for Attorney General of the United States, and its duty to scrutinize all presidential appointments, Walsh asserted:

"Certainly this, if not mere partisanship, is in the public interest and ought to receive the approval of every thoughtful citizen. The Senate in so acting is not usurping authority. It is merely performing one of the important functions intrusted to it. Our forefathers equipped the machinery of the Government with a set of safety devices, and these instruments were intended to be used."

Walsh condemns secret sessions of the Senate and states that many presidential appointments approved in executive session would be disapproved if they were considered in open session.

UNITED STATES SUES BETHLEHEM STEEL

Philadelphia, April 25.—The United States government has sued the Bethlehem Steel Company for $15,000,000 which it is claimed the company overcharged the government on ship construction in war time when Charles M. Schwab, president of Bethlehem Steel Company, was director-general of the United States Fleet Corporation.

The ship constructing companies were to be paid the cost of construction plus 10 per cent profit. The government claims that Schwab's company maintained it was impracticable to estimate the cost of ships constructing the ships. Therefore it was agreed that the builder should receive one-half of the saving to the government in the completion of the ship below the estimated cost.

It is alleged by the government that Schwab's company did know what the approximate cost would be and despite this knowledge made padded estimates "to derive excessive, unreasonable and unconscionable profits from said contracts."

The government also contends that Schwab scaled down the profits of the other companies to the 10 per cent basis while permitting his own company to rake off much larger profits in addition to the "savings" on production below estimates.

It was the wartime policy of the government to pay the profits of the war capitalists without much scrutiny, relying on their patriotism to do the square thing. After the armistice government auditors got to work on these patriotic contracts. The government's suit against the Schwab company is the result of the audit of the company's accounts.

TEMPORARY PUBLIC OPINION MEANS "RULE OF THE MOB"

Boston, April 25.—A contempt for public opinion expressed in elections as the determining factor in the government of the United States was voiced by Vice President Charles G. Dawes in an address at the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the battle of Concord and Lexington.

According to Dawes it would menace American institutions if a "temporary phase of public opinion"—that is to say, an opinion expressed in a popular election—should determine government policy. Such a rule would be a "rule of the mob."

To prevent this "rule of the mob," the Vice President explained, the patriots who framed the constitution provided a number of "checks." Under this system of "checks," before it becomes a law a demand made by public opinion must be approved by the House of Representatives elected for two years, the Senate elected for six years, the President elected for four years, and the Supreme Court appointed for life.

The House of Representatives can "check" the Senate by vetoing a Senate bill. The Senate can "check" the House by vetoing a House bill. The President can "check" both Houses with his veto. The Congress can "check" the President by passing a measure over the Presidential veto. And the Supreme Court can "check" the entire public—people, Congress and the President—by the exercise of its usurped veto power.

When "temporary public opinion" manifested in a popular election succeeds in driving its way over all these checks and balances it is "rule of the Supreme Court enjoying life tenure and not subject to election, it may be "rule of the judicial oligarchy" rather than a "temporary public opinion."

So reasons the Vice President of the United States.

NEW PLAN TO SECURE WORLD LABOR UNITY

London, April 25.—International labor organization by continents is recommended as a key plan for world unity in an article in the Labor Magazine by C. T. Cramp, industrial general secretary to the National Union of Railwaymen and fraternal delegate to the British Trade Union Congress to the 1924 convention of the American Federation of Labor.

Cramp maintains that in all cases where there is international competition for markets, the workers in the competing countries must not be allowed to black-leg each other by accepting lower standards of living. To accomplish this an effective international organization is necessary. The International Federation of Trade Unions aims to be a world wide organization, but its membership is largely European. Hence there is a real necessity for an organization that will meet the difficulty.

"I suggest that the British movement should consider the possibility of international organization by continents," says Cramp, in outlining his plan. "If Europe, America, Asia, Australasia, and Africa would each create a trade union center of its own, working, in turn, relationship with the movement in other continents, I believe that international understanding will speedily develop. It might be that one center would not be sufficient in vast territories and that America, for instance, might need two centers, one for the North and the other for the South. In this way international relationship would be better balanced, because it would be founded upon a general international basis, instead of the so-called world congresses, which up to now have given an overwhelming preponderance to a single country, namely, Europe, which it is obvious places American representatives in an inferior position."

LABOR OFFICE REPORT ON HOUSING PROBLEM

Washington, April 25.—The difference in housing policy between the United States and European countries is emphasized in a study and report on the housing situation in the United States, prepared by the Washington Branch of the International Labor Office, of which Leifer Magnusson is director.

"Practically all devices tried in European countries to stimulate housing have been resorted to, and their application or support in theory in the United States," declares the report, "but the methods employed have increasingly approached the European situation.

"The United States has slowly moved from purely sanitary regulation, requirements of light and space, to the more modern conception of control of rents, prohibition of eviction of tenants, remission of taxes on home building, and finance and construction through cooperative municipal enterprise.

"There are no instances of fixing building wages or prices of building materials. Europe affords few, if any, examples of the former, as it is true, but does of the latter practice.

"In short, in the United States housing has moved from a matter entirely of individual concern, a plaything of the market, the sport of supply and demand, to a matter of associated activity and community concern.

"Henceforth, the fundamental question will not be whether it is to be left to individual effort, but how much of the necessary housing effort, finance or development as the case may be, shall be left to voluntary and private associated effort and how much to compulsory official control by the community."

FOOD PRICE BOOSTERS KEEP ON BOOSTING

Washington, April 25.—Retail merchants boosted the price of food products 56 per cent during the 12-month period ending with March 15, 1925, according to figures made public by the U. S. bureau of labor statistics.

For the year ending March 15, they limited their boosting to 5 per cent. During the month ending March 15, they jacked up the price of 25 articles of food, running all the way from a 23 per cent boost for pork chops to 10 per cent for butter, 9 per cent for bacon, and 6 per cent for lard.

According to the bureau, the wholesalers also got active in price raising during the last year. In round numbers they raised farm products 17 per cent, foods 12 per cent, miscellaneous commodities 6 per cent, chemicals and drugs 3 per cent. Taking into consideration the few articles on which wholesale prices declined 3 to 23 per cent, the net result for the year.

STOCKHOLM EVICTS LARGE-INCOME TENANTS

Stockholm, Sweden, April 25.—Eviction of people of small means to find room houses to provide accommodation for people of small means is the policy of Stockholm to mitigate the housing shortage. City authorities investigate the income of every applicant being able to pay high rents. If the investigation shows that the suspicion was warranted, eviction notices are issued, and the large income tenants have to make room for the small income people. Many of whom are now living in temporary shelters.

NEW LABOR BANK

Philadelphia, April 25.—The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Title and Trust Company has opened for business with paid in capital of $500,000, and a surplus of $750,000.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TEST MENACE FOR ENTRANCE TO COLLEGE

Washington, April 25.—Twenty-eight per cent of the income of endowed colleges and universities is derived from railroad stocks and bonds, representing a total value of $148,979,933, according to the Bureau of Railway Economics.

Perhaps this large property interest explains in part the drive to restrict entrance to those colleges and authorities believe are "best fitted" to make the "most advantageous" use of the facilities of higher education.

Formerly college requirements were academic. A student's fitness to enter college was determined by ability to pass an examination in subjects included in the courses of secondary schools.

The children of the common people manifested a growing hunger for higher education. Educational authorities became alarmed at the large increase in college population and sought some device to bar the "unfit."

A "psychological" examination in addition to the academic one was extensively used to determine its efficiency in accomplishing the desired elimination.

Under "psychological" examination the would-be college student is tested relative to the extent to which he possesses qualities of mental alertness, industry and faithfulness, originality, integrity, straight-forwardness, moral and civic spirit, leadership, and physical, mental, and moral fitness and attitude.

The interpretation of some of these qualities is obviously shaded by the economic group to which one is allocated in modern industry and the views held relative to the proper economic and political organization of society.

Educational institutions and educators are coming to realize that those incomes is derived from profits as owners of industry will place different weights on certain qualities included in "psychological" tests than will persons whose incomes consist largely or entirely of wages as employes of industry.

Labor has certain economic, social, and political interests that are shared by employer theorists and academicians who often occupy positions of authority in colleges and universities the scope and character of the tests to bar the "unfit."

Nevertheless, we are evidently headed for colleges and universities of the select few, for the select few, by the select few.

A bulletin on "The Trend of College Requirements, 1913-1922," just issued by the U. S. Bureau of Education, reveals this policy when it states that "some method must be devised whereby the fitness of the applicants who are able to offer full academic requirements may be selected."

Under this policy the bureau concludes that "the psychological examination, in connection with a rigid exclusion of all but unusual qualifications," seems best adapted.

The American labor movement manifestly can not long afford to be given it approved the policy of workers' education independent of existing educational institutions and established workers' colleges and the Workers' Education Bureau of America to apply the policy.

FRENCH GOV'T DEFENDS RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

Paris, France, April 25.—"The trade union which was for long considered a mere source of trouble is more and more appearing in its true aspect as an agent of peace," declares the French Minister of Labor in support of a government measure to safeguard free dom of association. "It is becoming more and more part and parcel of the established situation, and for individual relations between employers and salaried employes or between employers and unions substituted the more stable, freer and more systematic collective relations between occupational groups.

"On the whole it may be said that freedom of association is recognized as an essential liberty which must not be in any way infringed. But there are still too many cases where the exercise of the right entails certain reprisals, the consequences of which are nearly always regretable.

"It is true that any infringement of the right of association is liable to lead to actions before the civil courts which may result in damages being awarded to the injured party; but this sanction is not sufficient. It should be added a penal sanction marking clearly the essential nature of the principles of the act."

The Minister of Labor points out that "an employer's refusal to engage a worker, or his dismissal, will not constitute an offense so long as it can be proved that such refusal to engage or such dismissal was not caused by the fact that the worker was a member of a trade union."

CONVICT LABOR LAW HAS RIGID PENALTY

Columbus, Ohio, April 25.—Drastic penalties are prescribed for those who violate the state convict labor law, according to an amendment supported by the Ohio State Federation of Labor and adopted by the recent session of the legislature. The new provision reads:

"Whoever violates any provisions of this act shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than one hundred nor more than fifty dollars for the first offense and not less than fifty dollars nor more than two hundred dollars for each subsequent offense."

Ohio has the state use plan for the employment of inmates of penal and reformatory institutions, with the provision that prison goods shipped in from other states shall be plainly labeled or branded "convict made."

The old law instructed the commissioner of labor to report violations of the statute to the attorney general, whose function was to "institute the proper legal proceedings to compel compliance with the law."

DOLLAR'S BUYING POWER DEFLATED TO 60 CENTS

New York, April 25.—Price boosters have elevated the cost of living over 65 per cent since 1914, according to figures made public by the national industrial conference board.

"The purchasing value of the dollar, based on the cost of living in March, 1925, was 60.5 as contrasted with one dollar in July, 1914," declares the board.

IOWA LABOR LEADER DIES

Muscatine, Iowa, April 25.—The labor movement suffers a severe loss in the death of John C. O'Brien, vice president of the Iowa Federation of Labor and for more than 20 years president of the Muscatine Trades and Labor Assembly. He was 63 years of age and had been a printer for 40 years.

A lasting personal friendship existed between Mr. O'Brien and Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, from the time of the latter's visit to Muscatine during the Dolly Madison workers' strike some years ago.

PICKET PROSECUTED

Washington, April 25.—The government has instituted the first prosecution in its determination to prosecute Mrs. Dorothy Ferguson, a member of the Retail Clerks' Protective Association, for walking back and forth on the public sidewalks in front of a haberdashery and distributing printed notices bearing the inscription, "This shop is unfair to organized labor." The proprietors assumed they have a property right in the possible patronage of pedestrians.

AUSTRALIA APPLIES ANTI-LABOR POLICY

London, April 25.—Philip Collier, premier of Western Australia, denies the statement of the Australian government that the government's fleet of merchant ships was sold because of labor troubles.

"The principal reason given for selling the Commonwealth line was that strikes of Australian seamen had practically put a stop to shipping," said Collier. "The real difficulty was that the Commonwealth has to pay higher wages to sailors than the British. To economize it tied up its own ships and chartered British ships to operate with lower wages crews. Naturally Australian labor resented this, and refused to unload the ships."

RENEW CONTRACT

Casper, Wyo., April 25.—Organized culinary workers of this city have renewed their wage contract. The largest hotels in this state are included.

NEEDLESS INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS LABOR'S BLOODY DIVIDEND

Geneva, Switzerland, April 25.—"Industrial accidents are in all countries one of the most pitiless scourges of the working class," declares the Industrial Safety Survey, a new publication issued by the International Labor Office. "Every year tens of thousands of workers are sacrificed in the exercise of their occupation, hundreds of thousands are crippled for life, and millions receive injuries which incapacitate them for a shorter or longer period.

"Even the economic loss which this wastage of labor represents is very considerable—entire loss to the community of the services of workers who are killed before they have been able to replace what they have cost it in education and maintenance, reduction of output of the permanently injured, whose needs are nevertheless at least as great as those of persons who are sound, and loss of output of the temporarily incapacitated during the period of their convalescence. The loss of production resulting from the interruptions which accidents always cause in the work of the undertaking itself it is impossible to estimate.

"Serious, however, as are the economic effects for the community as a whole, far more serious are the sufferings of the victims themselves. They are frequently paid, their standard of life is lowered as a result of the temporary or permanent reduction in their earning capacity, and they sometimes have to undergo privations, and there is a general change for the worse in their position. Instead of the steady improvement which every man has a right to expect as the reward of his labor, the accident to the breadwinner of a family partially relieve these sufferings of the actual victims, and cation can only partially relieve these sufferings of the actual victims, and of the services of persons who are killed before they have been able to replace what they have cost it in education and maintenance, reduction of output of the permanently injured, whose needs are nevertheless at least as great as those of persons who are sound, and loss of output of the temporarily incapacitated during the period of their convalescence. The loss of production resulting from the interruptions which accidents always

BOOKLET ON BUILDING

Washington, April 25.—Information relative to the building industry is contained in a booklet just issued by the Bureau of Standards, entitled "Recommended Minimum Requirements for Small Dwelling Construction."

RETAILERS' FAILURES PASSED TO CONSUMER

Boston, April 25.—There are too many retail stores in the United States. As a result thousands of them fall with a loss of $250,000,000 a year. The manufacturers, with their well known solicitude for the public interest, compel the consumer to stand practically all of this loss by charging it to overhead cost.

These remarkable statements are attributed to A. L. Filene, Boston department store magnate and chairman of a committee of the National Distribution Conference to investigate the question of too many retailers and formulate a plan to eliminate the surplus.

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States and Secretary of Commerce Hoover are cooperating in the solution of the problem. The difficulty consists in finding retailers who will not be injured by the new discord and in devising a way to prevent would-be retailers from opening new stores. To put the seamless burden ultimate consumer, in addition to supporting the retailers who succeed, will continue to be the unfortunate lot of the $250,000,000 which the bankrupt retailers refuse to pay.

There are evidently other things than taxes which are shifted to the broad shoulders of the ultimate consumer.

WIRE MEN SIGN CONTRACT

Portland, Ore., April. 25.—Electrical Workers' Union No. 125 has renewed its agreement with the Portland electric company.

COOLIDGE APPROVES IMMIGRATION CURB

Washington, April 25.—President Coolidge declared the necessity of continued immigration restriction in his address to the annual convention of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

"In the last few years we have entered on a new policy of immigration," the President said. "It is still rather experimental, but with every appearance of being likely to secure permanent acceptance.

"Restriction or immigration is nothing but the liberty and necessity of action with the new conditions and of the hard competition of such a situation would have been far more difficult."

"PRIVATE SAVINGS QUICKLY TRANSMUTED INTO CAPITAL"

Washington, April 25.—"In our modern society, public and private savings are quickly transmuted into capital available for production," declared President Coolidge in his radio address on the opening of the Women's World Fair in Chicago. "The invention produces goods more and more plentiful, and therefore cheaper, and at the lower price level people can buy more and more," continued the President.

The philosophy that increased production makes goods more plentiful and therefore cheaper harks back to the childhood of the competitive system when rivalry among manufacturers for business, with its inevitable warring of price cutting, was regarded as a 100 per cent protection for the ultimate consumer.

To destroy competition despite increased production costs, manufacturers early resorted to combinations and trusts.

Congress passed the Sherman Anti-Trust Law to compel competition by outlawing all combinations to control it.

Then the Supreme Court vetoed the Sherman Act by a decree which declared that "reasonable" combinations would not be considered a violation of the Anti-Trust Law.

Since then the universal court practise has been to allow manufacturers' combinations to maintain prices despite reduced production costs. This is the only "way" by which watered stock (usually called common stock) is placed on a dividend basis.

It may also be pointed out that hundreds of millions of dollars of the people's savings have within the last few months been loaned by the banks to brokers to finance the orgy of speculation which, in the language of the New York Annalist, drove security prices "above the level indicated by the highest estimated earnings probabilities," and maintained them for a number of months at "dizzying heights."

As an aftermath of this conspiracy financed by the people's savings, the friends of the people in Wall Street pulled away the artificial props and knocked security prices down to a point where they have been back for two billion dollars less than the figures at which they were unloaded on the "savers."